

## **9 FAM PART IV Appendix D, AUTOMATED VISA SYSTEMS**

### **9 FAM PART IV Appendix D, 100 INTRODUCTION**

#### **9 FAM PART IV Appendix D, 101 PURPOSE AND VARIETY OF SYSTEMS**

*(TL:VISA-119; 7-3-95)*

Automated visa systems provide lookout case management and/or assistance for visa processing. Systems include the Consular Lookout and Support System (CLASS) (formerly AVLOS); the Nonimmigrant Visa Computer-Assisted Processing System (NIVCAPS) which is gradually being replaced by the Machine Readable Visa (MRV); and the Immigrant Visa Applicant Control System (IVACS). Each system has its own manual or handbook containing operational instructions, which is available to all system users. Posts not having the appropriate handbook or which need extra copies may request them from the Consular Affairs Systems Application Staff (CA/EX/CSD).

#### **9 FAM PART IV Appendix D, 102 CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS**

*(TL:VISA-119; 7-3-95)*

IVACS and NIVCAPS provide case management assistance for immigrant and nonimmigrant visa processing, respectively. These systems automate manual procedures but do not change visa-processing functions. Automated systems provide more rapid and reliable access to case information than is possible with manual systems and allow the automated preparation of standard communications relating to visa cases. Most of the work automated by these systems is done by Foreign Service National Employees (FSNs), who are the primary systems users. American officers have a crucial role to play, however, in managing automated systems and in exploiting their considerable anti-fraud capabilities. The MRV system, which maximizes anti-fraud measures, requires more direct consular officer input.

## **9 FAM PART IV Appendix D, 103 LOOKOUT SYSTEMS**

*(TL:VISA-119; 7-3-95)*

The Consular Lookout and Support System (CLASS) consists of a large (several million names) automated data base in Washington, D.C., which contains the names of aliens who have been found ineligible for visas; those whose visa applications require a Departmental opinion prior to issuance; and those who might be ineligible for a visa should they apply for one. The system also includes the network of telecommunications lines linking posts to the Washington computer and the terminals used for CLASS access at posts abroad. Extracts of CLASS are sent to all visa-issuing posts in microfiche format, to be used as back-up to the automated system or for regular use at non-automated posts. An electronic version of the extract, called Distributed Name-check (DNC), is also under development and in operation at some posts.

### **9 FAM PART IV Appendix D, 103.1 Teletype Access**

*(TL:VISA-119; 7-3-95)*

Most "on-line" posts gain access to CLASS using teletype terminals to produce messages which are transmitted to the central CLASS computer over telecommunication lines.

### **9 FAM PART IV Appendix D, 103.2 Computer Access**

*(TL:VISA-119; 7-3-95)*

At some posts, CLASS access is achieved by use of computer equipment. This type of CLASS access is called "TTYREP," which replaces teletype equipment with word and/or data-processing terminals. TTYREP also permits CLASS access using data processing terminals at posts with minicomputers.

### **9 FAM PART IV Appendix D, 103.3 Automatic Access**

*(TL:VISA-119; 7-3-95)*

NIVCAPS and IVACS provide a third means of access to CLASS for name-checking purposes. These visa case management systems integrate the visa lookout and case management functions. The Department has also been able to install IVACS and NIVCAPS at posts without a telecommunications (TC) line. These TC-less IVACS and NIVCAPS posts, therefore, have no direct access to CLASS and must rely on either the

microfiche or an electronic equivalent (DNC) residing on the local post computer or PC.

## **9 FAM PART IV Appendix D, 104 SYSTEM SECURITY**

*(TL:VISA-119; 7-3-95)*

Automated systems are designed with built-in security features which, if used properly, prevent system abuse. All State Department programs run under Controlled User Environment (CUE) software that requires user passwords to access the system. These systems have clearly defined levels of system access that limit access to the most sensitive system functions to a few individuals. Although FSNs are the primary users, consular officers are ultimately responsible for the security of automated visa systems and the data they contain. Each post must develop appropriate procedures to review and monitor system use.

## **9 FAM PART IV Appendix D, 105 SYSTEM MANAGEMENT**

*(TL:VISA-119; 7-3-95)*

Posts with automated systems requiring minicomputers (IVACS and NIVCAPS) normally have a designated Foreign Service Officer serving as a systems manager who is responsible for the computer and the operations of programs and terminals. Consular officers are not expected to have the level of technical expertise required of the systems manager; visa officers should, however, be sufficiently familiar with the visa programs (IVACS and/or NIVCAPS or MRV) used at post to oversee effectively the work of the section and use the management features of the automated visa systems.